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In discussing the Hunzan game of polo with some friends, when they heard me mention the fact that the best and largest piece of flat land was used for a polo field, they said, "Now, John, this is very contradictory. You claim they are intelligent people and every bit of arable land is needed and used for cultivation and now you tell me that the best piece of land and the largest level space is used for a polo field!"

My reply was, "What I've told you is absolutely true, but sometimes there are considerations involved which neither you nor I nor others in the Western world understand. For example, could we ever explain to the people of Hunza why we rush, swish, hurry and risk our necks driving down the highways, actually risking life and limb—not only our own, but countless others—only to get to our destination . . . and there do nothing!

"Or there is another example that may be even better. A man in America strives all his life to achieve the means of acquiring a home with all modern conveniences and comforts, including every electrically operated appliance or gadget devised to save time and effort. Then when this victory is achieved, he tries to get enough money to buy a summer cottage way up north. There he parks his family for the summer. Then over every weekend he drives hundreds of miles to get there and when he gets there what has he got? Outdoor plumbing, no hot water, no garbage disposal, no electricity—using a lamp or even a candle for light and carrying every bucket of water in from the lake or the creek. You just try to explain that to a Hunzan. There is no more rhyme and reason in one than there is in the other. But who am I to judge?"

It is a positive fact that the men in Hunza do beat their wives. I checked and double checked on this rather important question. The Mir told me he knew

593 of only one case where a man excessively and unjustly
683 administered thrashings on his spouse. In all other instances the men are not punished or sent to prison for it. If a wife doesn't do as her husband commands, he beats her. If she were too generous in giving away her husband's property to her parents, he would also beat
837 her. If she is unfaithful to him and he catches her, he has a right to kill both her and her seducer.

This seems to have an excellent effect in maintaining a high standard of loyalty. I am not sure as to how
000 the people of the West will regard the people of Hunza for the light I have shed here, but whatever your judgment and opinion, I have laid the facts before you.

586 The Hunzan law says that in such cases a child must remain with the mother until it is at least 10 years of age. Of course the child can remain with the mother after that period, too, but the father does not have to pay for its keep after that. Divorce is granted to a man only on the grounds of adultery.

Under Hunzan law a woman cannot get a divorce due to any action on the part of her husband. How-
[643] ever, on some occasions where there has been extreme provocation or other clear logical reasons, and the woman brings her justifiable complaint for divorce before the Mir in person, and if the Mir believes her case merits divorce or separation from the man, he will ask or demand of the man that he divorce his wife.

If the wife decides or wants to leave her husband's bed and board of her own free will, the husband does not have to pay for her keep. She will not receive sustenance from him, but he does have to supply her with clothing twice a year.

587 In the event of the death of his wife, the husband is required to wait two months and seven days before he can remarry. However, with the woman, in the event of the death of her husband, she must wait three months and ten days before she can remarry.

586 The Mir gave me an example of a divorce case where
●683 a certain man had the insidious habit of beating his wife. It seemed he would administer a sound thrashing at the slightest, or even without provocation, until the girl's parents and friends began to fear for her life. In this instance the wife-beater was notified quite clearly and distinctly that it would be in the best interests of all concerned if he gave his wife a divorce.

586 I don't know in what light they regarded this, but now that they knew the man was an avowed wife-beater, if any other woman took the risk of marrying

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him, she would at least know beforehand what she had to contend with. Then again, as the Mir performs all marriages, maybe he wouldn't allow this young man to take a second wife. I did not inquire any further into the details concerning this case, but I admit that I was somewhat surprised to think that a good healthy happy Hunzan would resort to one of civilization's favorite pastimes . . . wife-beating.

Wife-beating generally seems to be broadly practiced in Hunza. This struck me as being most strange for I could see little cause or likelihood of opportunities for misdemeanors on the part of the wife.

Upon taking the matter up with the Mir, he told me that most cases of wife-beating were brought about by nagging, and in Hunza that is sufficient justifiable cause for a man to administer a sound thrashing to his wife and she can't take him to the Mir's court about it, either. The next most frequent cause for wife-beating is over-generosity to her parents with her husband's possessions.

Wife-beating under such provocations as stated might meet with universal support and approval on the part of mankind. There may be principles and practices in Hunza that will not find widespread support in the West, but I'll bet on the basis of the two causes for wife-beating there will be broad, if not general, male approval.

By Hunza law a daughter cannot inherit property. The best that she can get in a property settlement is the use of the property for her lifetime. It then must revert to a male member of the father's family. There have been instances where a daughter has been willed an individual tree—in most cases, an apricot tree. This remains her property, or at least the crops do, for as long as the tree or she lives.